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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/624,182	07/22/2003	Russell C. Fielding	706263US2	6842

7590 04/09/2004

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EXAMINER

PATEL, KIRAN B

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3612

DATE MAILED: 04/09/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. 10/624,182	Applicant(s) FIELDING, RUSSELL C.	
	Examiner Kiran B. Patel	Art Unit 3612	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                                                                                 | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                                                        | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/10/03 &amp; 7/22/03</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                                |

**DETAILED ACTION**  
**Non-Final Rejection**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. Claim 1-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barbour (4,639,032) in view of Hsiao (3,693,564) and ordinary skill in the art.

Regarding claims 1-16, Barbour (4,639,032) discloses the invention as claimed to include a vehicle closure 22; a vehicle 28; an internal cavity, Fig 4; one orifice, Fig 4; a track mechanism 11; a step member 18; a first and second leg having an inboard portion and an outboard portion, Fig 2; a joining segment forming a continuous U-shaped step member 18; hinges 17; an access hole 25; one stop pin 13; one retention slot 14; and a first and second track 11.

However, Barbour (4,639,032) does not disclose an interlock assembly comprising a bell crank lever arm and spring loaded interlock.

Hsiao (3,693,564) discloses an interlock assembly comprising a bell crank lever arm and spring loaded interlock, col 1, lines 65 to col 2, line 65.


Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention, as disclosed by Barbour (4,639,032), to include an interlock assembly comprising a bell crank lever arm and spring loaded interlock, as disclosed by Hsiao (3,693,564), and also the known use of a bell crank lever arm and spring loaded interlock in the art to prevent closing of the vehicle closure member when the step member is in the deployed position.

#### *Conclusion*

2. The prior art made of record in attached Notice of Reference Cited (PTO-892) and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. This art of record shows various features similar to the applicant's invention.

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3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications should be directed to Primary Examiner Kiran B. Patel whose telephone number is 703-305-0254. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 8:00 to 5:00. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

  
Kiran B. Patel, P. E.  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3612  
April 2, 2004